

SPORTS

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Cowboys destroy Nebraska in Stillwater

Losing Big

Saturday's loss to Oklahoma State marked the Huskers' eighth-worst loss ever and worst since the 1989-90 season, when Oklahoma defeated the Huskers by 41 points.

Nebraska's 10 worst losses

46-102	56	at Kansas	1957-58
29-73	44	at Haskell Institute	1901-02
9-52	43	at Minnesota	1901-02
27-69	42	at Illinois	1942-43
30-72	42	at Kansas	1945-46
47-89	42	Colorado (at K.C.)	1954-55
64-105	41	at Oklahoma	1989-90
53-93	40	at Oklahoma State	1994-95
15-55	40	at DePaul	1943-44
4-43	39	at Wisconsin	1907-08
16-55	39	at Missouri	1921-22
54-93	39	at Oklahoma State	1964-65

By Trevor Parks

Staff Reporter

STILLWATER, Okla. — The Oklahoma State basketball team came hard at Nebraska.

And unfortunately for the Cornhuskers, the Cowboys kept coming and coming and coming.

No. 22 Oklahoma State improved to 18-7 and 7-2 in the conference with a 93-53 win over Nebraska Saturday in front of 6,381 fans at Gallagher-Iba Arena.

Nebraska dropped to 16-9 and 3-7 in the Big Eight.

The defeat was Nebraska's worst since a 105-64 loss at Oklahoma on Jan. 30, 1990, and the worst in 97 career games against Oklahoma State.

The Huskers were dominated from start to finish by the Cowboys, Husker coach Danny Nee said.

"I just thought they were the superior team,"

Nee said. "We didn't get anything accomplished that I thought was positive."

But there was one positive for Nebraska — the Huskers took a lead, something they didn't do when the two teams met Feb. 5 in Lincoln.

Nebraska never led in the first game, a 82-65 loss, but had leads of 2-0, 4-3 and 6-5 in Saturday's game.

But after a Terry Collins 3-pointer, Nebraska never led again.

The Huskers did play solid basketball for the first 15:11 of the half, trailing only 28-24 after Jaron Boone nailed a 3-pointer.

Then the Cowboys went on a 21-5 run to end the first half and take a 49-29 lead.

The Cowboys' Randy Rutherford, the game's leading scorer with 22 points, began the run by making three free throws after being fouled by Erick Strickland on a 3-point attempt.

The Huskers scored their only five points in the run on a jumper by Boone, who led the Huskers with 20 points, and a 3-point basket by

Chester Surles.

Surles' shot brought Nebraska to within 17 points at 46-29 with 1:23 left. But that was the closest the Huskers could get for the remainder of the game.

The Cowboys were on fire in the first half, shooting 64 percent from the field and 8-for-11 from outside the 3-point line.

Meanwhile, Nebraska struggled with 35.5 percent shooting. The Huskers could only make two out of their last nine shots in the final 4:49 of the half.

Nebraska senior Melvin Brooks, who was held scoreless for only the fourth time in his two years as a Husker, said he had never seen anything like the way the half ended.

"It shocked me," Brooks said. "They played well and capitalized off our misses."

Nee said the Cowboys were relentless in

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Season-opening win helps Huskers relax

By Jeff Griesch

Senior Reporter

The Nebraska baseball team used the long ball to make short work of Nebraska-Kearney in a 9-0 win in front of a crowd of 1,453 at Buck Beltzer Field Sunday.

Jed Dalton, Darin Erstad and Alvie Shepherd all hit home runs as the Cornhuskers opened their season as Coach John Sanders said he hoped they would.

"Everybody did a solid job today, and we're glad we could get those first-game jitters out of the way,"

Sanders said. "We had great weather and a great crowd, and we just couldn't have asked for a nicer start to the season."

Dalton opened Nebraska's season with a leadoff home run on Ryan Johnson's second pitch in the bottom of the first inning to give the Huskers a quick 1-0 lead.

In the bottom of the fourth, Erstad provided the game's biggest blast with a one-out grand slam off Nebraska-Kearney pitcher Neal Arnold.

Erstad, who was picked by Baseball America as the top college player in the country, lived up to the pre-season billing, going 2 for 4 with a home run and 4 RBI.

"I am a notorious slow starter, so it feels great to get that first one out of the way," Erstad said. "Everything really went as I expected it to today. There is a lot of promise here."

Shepherd followed Erstad's home run with a shot of his own to left center field to cap Nebraska's seven-run fourth inning.

As a team, the Huskers pounded out 13 hits against four Nebraska-Kearney pitchers.

Dalton led the Huskers with three hits and a walk, and scored three runs.

Shortstop Darin Petersen and catcher David Crain each had two hits and an RBI.

Right fielder Mel Motley smashed a triple off the center-field fence, and Scott Wulfing and Patrick Johnson singled.

While the Husker hitters were providing the power, the Nebraska pitching staff kept the Lopers' bats silent.

Ten Nebraska pitchers combined on a 3-hit shutout, while striking out 10 hitters and walking just four.

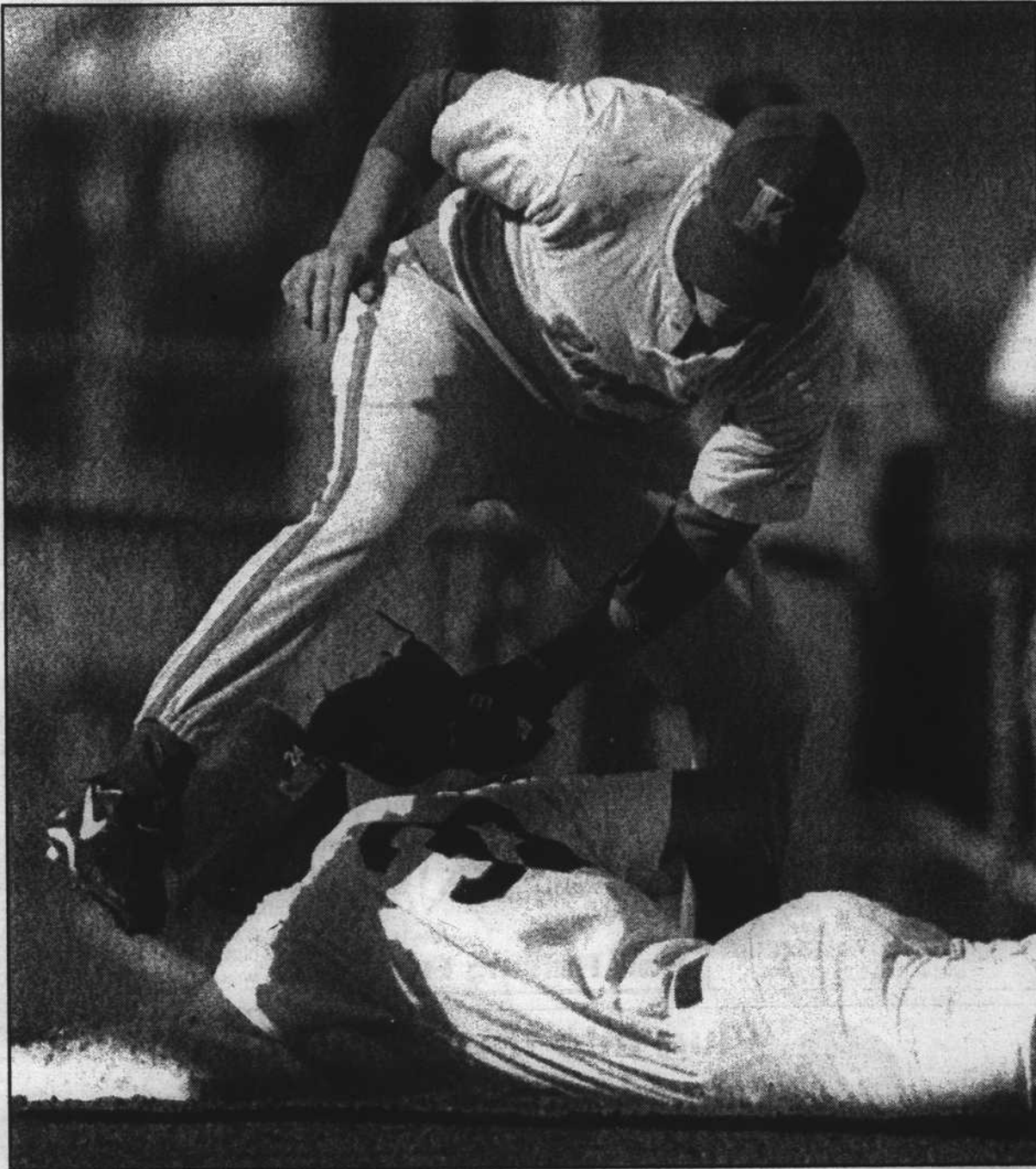
Starter Cody Winget got the win for the Huskers, while Johnson took the loss for the Lopers.

Sanders said the performance of the Nebraska pitching staff was encouraging.

"We got to see a lot of pitchers, and they all did a solid job," Sanders said. "Everybody came out and threw strikes and got the first game out of the way, which will help us when we go out West next week."

An error-free Nebraska defense helped the pitching staff, and Sanders said he expected to see more of the same from the defense throughout the season.

"It was really a clean game, which we like to see this early in the season," Sanders said. "But we were eighth in the country last season defensively, and we're expecting to be better than that this season."



Jon Waller/DN

Nebraska-Kearney's Doug Mitchell tags out Nebraska's Darin Petersen after he tried for a triple in the first inning. Nebraska won the game 9-0.

Dalton starts off Husker home run parade with a blast

By Derek Samson

Senior Reporter

It didn't take long for Jed Dalton to see results from his off-season workouts in Nebraska's 9-0 season-opening win over Nebraska-Kearney Sunday.

The senior third baseman led off the season for Nebraska with a solo home run directly over the 330-foot sign in left field at Buck Beltzer Stadium.

Dalton sent the second pitch from Lopers' pitcher Ryan Johnson over the fence, and finished the game by going 3 for 3 and scoring three times.

"I think that's the first time I've ever started the season off with a home run," Dalton said. "It was kind of surprising. I was hoping that it

would get us going.

"I'm basically a line-drive hitter and I just try to get on so (Darin) Erstad can hit me in. I guess I just got lucky with that one."

But luck might not have had anything to do with it. It may have been Dalton's work in the off-season that did the trick, he said.

After hitting .358 in 1992 and .339 in 1993, Dalton's average dropped to .263 with four home runs last season.

After his junior season ended, Dalton hit the weight room and added 20 pounds to his 6-foot-2 frame and also worked on his swing with assistant coach Mike Ashman.

"I think my confidence is up a lot more because of the time I've put in in the weight room and on the field," Dalton said. "I'm sure that had something to do with what happened

with me today. I'm stronger, and I know that will definitely help me all season.

"I also worked with Mike on developing a short, compact swing. I think even more than the weights, it was the work with Mike. The weights definitely have something to do with it because I have a lot more power, but I don't have to swing as hard with a short, compact stroke."

Alvie Shepherd and Erstad also hit home runs Sunday for Nebraska. Erstad's blast was a fourth-inning grand slam.

Dalton said Nebraska's big guns should keep producing the big numbers.

"We've got a great team and a lot of talent," he said. "I would hate (to pitch against the Huskers), absolutely hate it. We've got a lot of guys that can take care of everything them-

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JED DALTON

NU third baseman

selves.

"I think we've taken the pressure off of ourselves early on. We pressed too much last season early in the season. We were expecting the season to start off like this today, so it was a good win."